

June 19th, 2003

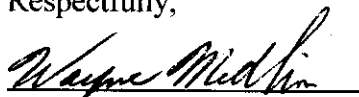
“COOL” – Country Of Origin Labeling Meeting in Baton Rouge, La.

Re: USDA - Concerns for **Country Hill Farm** (*Angus & BeefMaster Seed Stock*)

Owners: Wayne & Debbie Medlin
452 Williamson Rd.
Stonewall, La. 71078
Email: chfarm@shreve.net
Web: www.countryhillfarm.com
Ph. (318) 687-8563

1. New and additional producer insurance costs - July 2002 Newly created Federal Crop Insurance Program – “LRP” – Livestock RISK Protection. When will such insurance be made available to producers and not just feeders? Due to “APHIS” – Animal Plant Health Inspection Service being able to quarantine or identify cattle for depopulation due to illnesses like Mad Cow and Hoof & Mouth, etc....
2. Current law as written only allows one-way tracking, retail back to producer. Producers need the ability to know the route their product takes to get to the ultimately end customer be it restaurant, pkg. retail, animal food and/or exported.
3. What legal recourse is available for producers under TORT law when a producer’s beef is identified by USDA inspection as causing health issues? USDA should suggest all producers collect DNA samples of their animals NOW (with Spring 2003 calves)! *Reason, recent suit by Nebraska Beef suing USDA and nine of their inspectors because of a pattern of alleged inspector's bias, intentionally ignored federal regulations, false food-safety violations and making threatening and retaliatory comments.*
4. Standard but Unique Animal Identification for ALL Breeds and ALL Animals needed prior to October 1st, 2004.
5. Third party audit costs recovery for producers? Not in COOL law but being pushed by “FMI” Food Market Institute, for retailers, and therefore ALL Costs should be covered by the parties not wanting to allow producers self-certification.
6. Costs to enforce and police full stream protein labeling are a much larger burden for the small producer (the majority). Example: \$1.00 Check-Off per animal still being debated. In a commodity business, such as cattle, the profit margin for many years has been too small, if any, for breeders.
7. COOL has been seen, by some, as an attempt by the USDA/govt. to contravene NAFTA, Canada-U.S. Trade Agreements and/or WTO Rules? Cattlemen need fair and consistent import and export policies, today more than ever. As a small cattle producer I am appalled at the current amount of live cattle being imported into the U.S., at the expense of small farming families, today. Example: Imported live cattle in 1980 were 700,000 but in 2000 it was 2.2 million. It appears the intent is to eliminate the small cattle operations just like the U.S. steel, textile, telecommunications and manufacturing operations in general.

Respectfully,


Wayne Medlin